

REMARKS

By this Amendment, Applicants have canceled claim 3 without prejudice or disclaimer; amended claims 1 and 2; and added new claim 18. No new matter has been added. The amendment to claim 2 and the subject matter of claim 18 are supported in the originally-filed disclosure at least by virtue of Fig. 2(a) and at least by virtue of Figs. 3(a) and 3(c), respectively. Claims 1, 2, and 4-18 are pending.

In the Office Action, the Examiner acknowledged Applicants' election without traverse to prosecute Group I, claims 1-6; withdrew claims 7-17 from consideration as being directed to a non-elected grouping; rejected claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Ijima et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,510,121); rejected claims 4 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ijima et al. in view of Togashi (U.S. Patent No. 6,437,928); and indicated that claims 3 and 6 contain allowable subject matter.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 3 and 6 contain allowable subject matter, and Applicants have incorporated the subject matter of claim 3 into claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1 is allowable. Furthermore, Applicants submit that claims 2, 4-6, and 18 are allowable by virtue of their dependency on claim 1, as well by their additional recitations of novel and non-obvious subject matter.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of pending claims 1, 2, 4-6, and 18.

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If the Examiner believes that a telephone conversation might advance prosecution, the Examiner is cordially invited to call Applicants' representative at 571-203-2739.

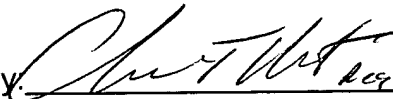
Applicants respectfully submit that the Office Action contains numerous assertions concerning the related art and the claims. Regardless of whether those assertions are addressed specifically herein, Applicants respectfully decline to automatically subscribe to them.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our Deposit Account No. 6-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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